

8 Blue Newsletter

September 2005



Hello!

Welcome to 8 Blue. We are so excited about this school year. We have enjoyed meeting and getting to know your children. We look forward to meeting you and working with you this school year.

We have our 8th grade Open House night coming up on Tuesday, October 11th. Look for more information through Monday Envelopes.

Please remember to check the Monday Envelopes for information throughout the year.

Math

The first few weeks are going by quickly and we're well on our way to a great year! We're organizing our notebooks, covering our text books, and getting a good start on the year.

One of the most commonly asked questions I receive from parents is "What can I do to help my son or daughter in math?". You can expect that they will have a math

assignment every night and if you can provide a quiet place in the house for them to do their work, this is a great beginning. You know your child's learning style and need to work out a study system that works best for you. You might want to check that their assignment is neatly done with the appropriate work shown that explains how they got the answer. You might want them to take their math notebook home periodically so you can go through it with them. You can find tests, quizzes, and returned homework assignments in the notebook to help you understand how they are progressing in math. Remember there is after school help three days a week if they have questions.

Here's to a GREAT YEAR!!!!

Science

8th grade science is a busy year. Hopefully you have already seen the science expectations sheet, which lists the units covered this school year and grading policy. Your student should have a copy in his/her science binder.

We have just finished reviewing science safety rules and safety equipment. We will be revisiting the metric system and scientific method over the next

few weeks. Then, onto matter.



Social Studies

This year students will study World Civilization from the rise of the Byzantine Empire to the Scientific Revolution. Students will access the curriculum through a variety of mediums including primary sources, simulations, role-plays, readings, discussions, debates, video, music and artwork. Students have copies of the homework policy and classroom agreements in their binders. Students will also be given a set of learning goals at the beginning of each new unit of study. These goals will also be placed in their binders and will keep you informed of the specific expectations for each unit. Please take the opportunity to review and discuss this information with your child. I look forward to meeting you all on Curriculum Night

Language Arts

Welcome to the 8 Blue team. We are all getting to know one

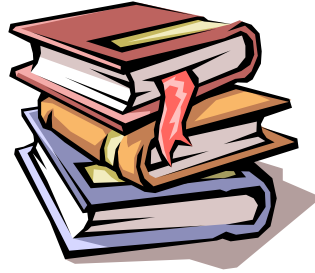
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another. The beginning of the year in Language Arts is mostly spent learning your child's reading and writing abilities, learning styles and personality. They, in turn, are learning about each other and how to be a responsible member of our classroom community. Setting up their Language Arts notebooks was the first step!

Soon they will start to share their summer reading. Towards this end, students were asked to complete two graphic organizers for their choice summer reading, and one for *Nothing But the Truth*. Both of these are available on the town web-site under the "Summer Reading" link, as well as in my classroom. Please encourage and assist your child in completing these if they have not done so yet. Over the next week or so you will begin to see assignment summary handouts as well as assignments in their planners for the 3-Minute Book Talk. The grading rubric for this assignment is also posted on-line under the same link "Summer Reading".

I look forward to meeting you all on Curriculum Night!



Sustained Silent Reading- Making Meaning Out of Reading

SSR stands for Silent Sustained Reading. You may have already noticed that your child has a twenty-five minute period devoted to SSR every day. This program is designed and implemented by Ms. Daly, and supported by the rest of the team teachers. It is based on the philosophy that all students need an opportunity to engage in sustained reading on a regular basis to improve reading comprehension. We have seen great improvements in student's reading habits through the SSR program.

In the past, students were asked to provide their own SSR reading materials. This year, however, the students will choose a title from the

classroom library, which they will then read along with three to seven other students. They then participate in literature circles once every six days during SSR period. This allows the students the opportunity to process what they are reading with their peers on a regular basis.

We Need Books!

We have received a \$500 grant from the Middle School to purchase high quality reading materials for the SSR program. However, the majority of costs still lie on the teachers. For this reason we are asking you to donate your unwanted books. Summer reading books are great, as we can then accumulate multiple copies of a title. But if you are looking to clean out some bookshelves, we are happy to accept the gift! Thank You!

8 Blue Teachers
Lisa Daly, Sue Hogan,
Stacey Militello and
Kelli O'Neill